

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Church of God Big Sandy

ChurchofGodBigSandy.com

Nov. 22, 2025 • 1:00 p.m. • Sunset 5:18

Bible studies

Interactive study—1:00 p.m. Jim Bald

Presentation study—2:00 Dave Havir
(also transmitted live)

Order of service—3:00 p.m.

Song leader Neil McIver

Pianist Dixon Cartwright

Scripture reading Ephesians 6:10-24

Sermon Neil McIver

Quick takes

1. Dominoes tomorrow—Interested participants should contact Sue Jones.
2. Community Thanksgiving Gathering—Our congregation has the privilege of hosting the 2025 Community Thanksgiving Gathering in our building. (Our congregation became active in this annual event in 2017. Our congregation had the privilege of previously hosting the event in 2019—and now again in 2025.)
 - Date—Sunday, Nov. 23
 - Time—4:30 p.m.
 - Location—in our building
 - Mayor Linda Baggett asked the community to bring snacks
3. Birth announcement—Stanley and Roxanna West would like to announce the arrival of their great-grandson Bennet King Wilson on Nov. 20. He weighed in at 9 pounds 4 ounces—“looking like he already has been working out in the gym.” Mother Aubrey and father Bridger are both doing well, along with grandparents Gramm and April Roberts.
4. Wednesday-night Bible study—Nov. 26 at 7:00.
5. Edifying the Body—This week’s article is “As Religion Weakens, Socialism Strengthens” by Star Parker.

6. Among Friends—This week's article is "Obey to Be Blessed at the Resurrection—Part 2" by Dave Havir.
7. Eye on the World—Two articles and 163 headlines.

Prayer updates

Following is an update about **Hunter Sharp**: "He is getting better every day. He is talking to us now. He had a skin-graft surgery on Friday morning, and everything went well. Thank you all for all the prayers. God is so good."

On Monday, **Gloria Hoppe** had an appointment with her rheumatoid-arthritis doctor. Following is an excerpt that she sent to her daughter, **Jody**: "My lab work still looks good, except for inflammation that is settling mostly in my left hip and lower back. Walking is in the beginning stage of being difficult, especially with balance." Following is an excerpt that she sent to her son, **Keith**: "Dr. Kamali's infusion nurse just called. I can no longer self-inject the new rheumatoid-arthritis medication. Must do infusion. The next appointment is set for Dec. 2 at 3:00."

In last week's bulletin, we mentioned that **Ronnie Shirley** was scheduled to go to a hospital on Wednesday to deal with colon cancer. We later learned that the goal was to remove a polyp, since doctors have apparently found a more non-invasive way to cut polyps out. When the doctor saw the polyp, he did not want to address it at this time and plans to deal with it soon. (Concerning another matter, Home Health has been providing three visits a month but may be curtailing its service.)

Nancy Diraison thanks you for your prayers as she has been dealing with respiratory challenges.

Joyce Canepa of Flagstaff, Ariz., reports that her lab results (for thyroid, liver and cholesterol) were excellent. She reported: "The doctor believes I am allergic to dairy—which makes sense since my oldest brother was. (The itching is still a challenge.) Thank you for helping me with your prayers."

New prayer requests

Aaron and **Annette Atteberry** request prayers for her brother, **Wendell Benningfield**, who had a serious heart attack last Sunday. He returned home on Thursday. The doctor said that the heart attack was significant. He has to wear a defibrillator vest for a month, then he will evaluate the options. Continue wearing the vest? Have a defibrillator implanted? If the heart has recovered enough, Mr. Atteberry would not need a defibrillator. The family appreciates your prayers.

On Monday night, **Sky Crist** (daughter of **Lonnie** and **Jennifer Crist**) was flown to Dallas Children's Hospital "because she's in diabetic ketoacidosis." On Tuesday, we heard: "Her ketones are almost low enough now to take her off insulin drip and let her finally eat. I think they will move us downstairs to another room. I think we should be home on Friday."

“Obey to Be Blessed at the Resurrection—Part 2”

This article is from the “Among Friends” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website (churchofgodbigandy.com). It was posted for the weekend of Nov. 22 2025.

By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I continued with a series. The title was “Obey to Be Blessed at the Resurrection—Part 2.” This series is related to a presentation that I gave on Saturday, Oct. 18. In that presentation, I presented three reasons why we obey God.

Those three reasons were the following.

- To be Blessed Now
- To be Blessed at the Resurrection
- To Glorify and to Honor the Father and the Son

When I covered the concept of being blessed now, I gave two presentations. To cover the concept of being blessed at the resurrection, I expect to give three presentations. Part 1 of being blessed at the resurrection discussed scriptures involving the words *resurrection* and being *raised*. Part 2 will discuss the concepts of the “Kingdom of Heaven” and the “Kingdom of God.”

Foundational scriptures

The foundational scripture for this three-part series is Luke 14:14.

■ Luke 14:14—Believers are instructed to do the correct behavior, even when people cannot repay them—because they will be “repaid at the resurrection of the just.”

I added another foundational scripture for this presentation.

■ 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18—The Lord Himself will descend from heaven and the dead in Christ shall rise first—followed by those who are alive.

Matthew’s gospel is different

Bible students are aware that the Gospel of Matthew often (but not always) used a different description about the Kingdom. He often called it the “Kingdom of Heaven,” and the others called it the “Kingdom of God.”

I found an interesting article titled “What Is the Difference Between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven?” at gotquestions.org.

■ The article said: “While some believe that the Kingdom of God and Kingdom of Heaven are referring to different things, it is clear that both phrases are referring to the same thing. The phrase ‘kingdom of God’ occurs 68 times in 10 different New Testament books, while ‘kingdom of heaven’ occurs only 32 times and only in the Gospel of Matthew. Based on Matthew’s exclusive use of the phrase and the Jewish nature of his Gospel, some interpreters have concluded that Matthew was writing concerning the millennial kingdom while the other New Testament authors were referring to the universal kingdom. However, a closer study of the use of the phrase reveals that this interpretation is in error.”

I agree with that article.

Millennial kingdom

The term “millennial kingdom” refers to Revelation 20:1-6, which talks about events surrounding a thousand years (millennium). For the record, there are three common descriptions of the Millennium.

■ Amillennialists—Christ’s reign with His saints (now) between His two comings.

■ Postmillennialists—Christ returns *after* the Millennium as a golden age, when the majority of the world is viewed as converting to Christianity.

■ Premillennialists—Christ returns *before* the Millennium—preceded by a period of intense tribulation. (Most of the people in my circle of life are premillennialists.)

Back to gotquestions.org

Now, let’s return to gotquestions.org.

■ The article referred to Matthew 19:23-24, where Jesus used both terms (kingdom of heaven and kingdom of God)—making no distinction between the two terms and seemed to consider them synonymous.

The article also included a list of scriptures where Matthew used the phrase “kingdom of heaven” while Mark and/or Luke used “kingdom of God.” Clearly, the two

phrases refer to the same thing.

■ Matthew 8:11 and Luke 13, 28-29.

■ Matthew 11:11-12 and Luke 7:28.

■ Matthew 13:11, Mark 4:11 and Luke 8:10.

■ Matthew 13:24 and Mark 4:26.

■ Matthew 13:31, Mark 4:30 and Luke 13:18.

■ Matthew 13:33 and Luke 13:20.

■ Matthew 18:3, Mark 10:14 and Luke 18:16.

Blessings for behavior

■ Luke 6:20—Blessed are you poor—for yours is the Kingdom of God.

■ Luke 6:22-23—Blessed are you when people hate you, exclude you and call your name evil (for the Son of Man's sake)—for your reward is great in heaven.

■ Matthew 5:3—"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

■ Matthew 5:4—"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."

■ Matthew 5:5—"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

■ Matthew 5:6—"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled."

■ Matthew 5:7—"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

■ Matthew 5:8—"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

■ Matthew 5:9—"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."

■ Matthew 5:10—"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

■ Matthew 5:11-12—"Blessed are you when they revile you, persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven (for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you)."

How is the Kingdom within you?

When Bible students read Luke 17:20-21, we sometimes have a small difference of perspective about the Kingdom of God being "within" people.

For the record—I definitely acknowledge

that God's Spirit comes inside us, but I don't believe that Luke 17:20-21 makes that point as well as other scriptures in the Bible. Let's notice the phrase "the Kingdom of God is within you" in Luke 17:20-21 from seven different translations.

■ The Kingdom of God is within you—King James Version and New King James Version.

■ The Kingdom of God is in the midst of you—James Moffatt Translation; New American Standard Bible; and Revised Standard Version.

■ The Kingdom of God is among you—Holman Christian Standard Bible.

■ The Kingdom of God is already among you—New Living Translation.

Therefore, I believe that the main lesson of Luke 17:20-21 is that the Son of God came and was among them. But I believe that there are other valuable verses that talk about God being in us.

The change is coming

I certainly believe that it is vital to have the Holy Spirit of God within us.

■ Romans 8:11—If the Spirit of Him (who raised Jesus from the dead) dwells in you, He (who raised Christ from the dead) will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit which dwells in you.

■ 1 Corinthians 15:53—For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

■ 2 Corinthians 1:22—God has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

■ Ephesians 1:13—You were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

Future blessings

■ Romans 8:18—The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

■ 1 John 3:2—We are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be. But we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him—for we shall see Him as He is.

I plan to share more verses at next Wednesday's Bible study, and I plan to write about those verses in next Saturday's bulletin.